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Psychosocial impact of food and nutrition in people with IBD: a qualitative study

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The British Psychological Society
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INTRODUCTION

Food and eating can be a source of pleasure, means of social interaction and peer acceptance. Having Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) may alter these psychosocial factors because of painful or embarrassing symptoms and/or undernutrition resulting in activity limitation. However little is currently known about the impact of IBD on the psychosocial factors of food and quality of life.

AIMS

This study aimed to determine patients' experiences of the social and psychological impacts of food on people with IBD.

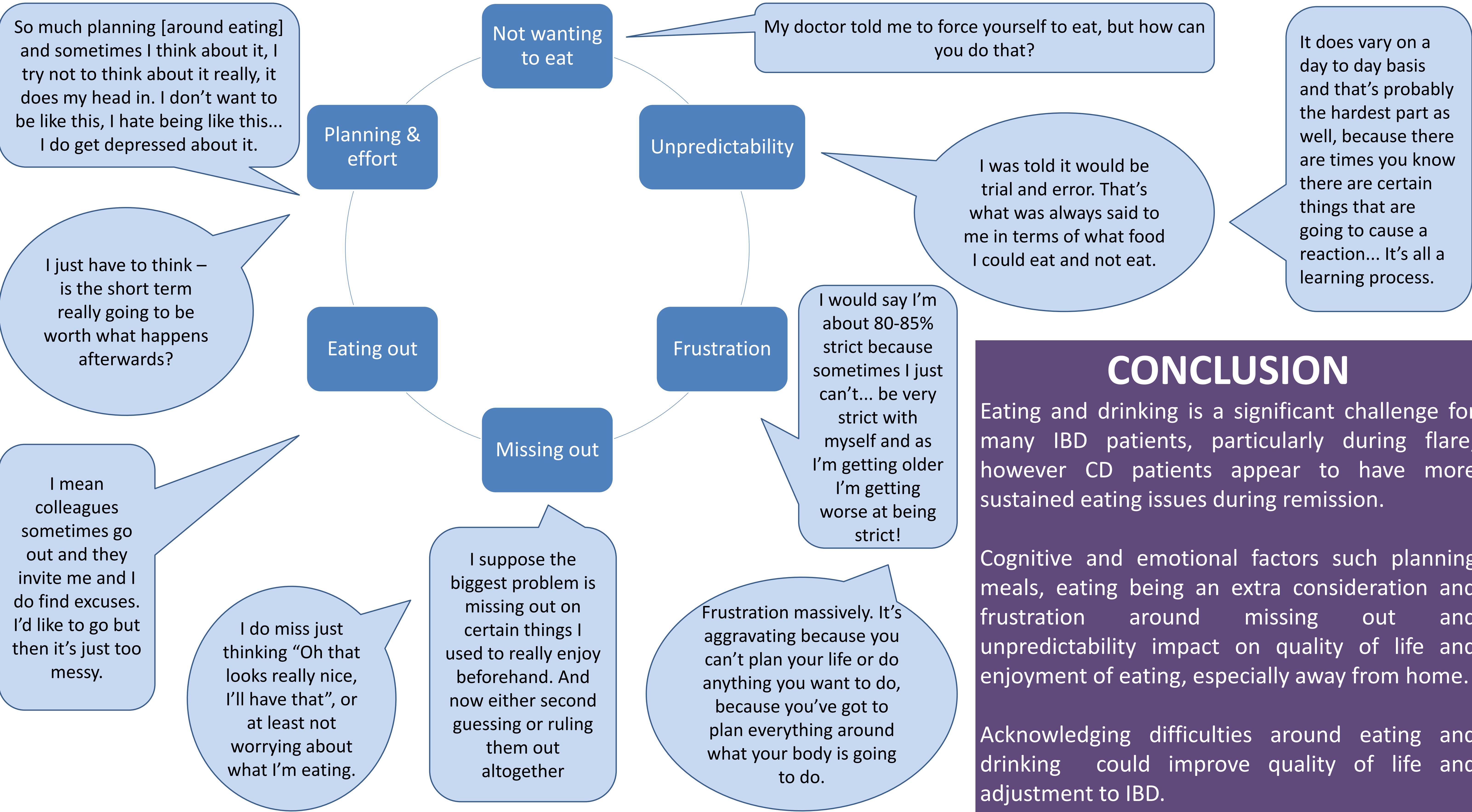
METHODS

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 28 patients regarding their experiences of food and eating in relation to their IBD. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Concepts were labelled through line by line coding using a constant comparative approach based on grounded theory.

Eating out is much, much harder. And I'm only just starting to get to grips with that.

RESULTS

Disease Type	Male (%)	Age (Mean, SD)	Years since diagnosis (Mean, SD)	Surgery (%)	Active disease (%)	BMI (Mean, SD)	MUST score		
							Low (%)	Medium (%)	High (%)
Crohn's Disease	43.75%	37.59 (12.06)	10.34 (10.86)	43.75%	56.25%	23.33 (5.58)	63.63%	18.18%	18.18%
Ulcerative Colitis	50%	37.26 (12.48)	10.41 (10.80)	8.30%	25%	23.22 (5.67)	50%	40%	10%



CONCLUSION

Eating and drinking is a significant challenge for many IBD patients, particularly during flare; however CD patients appear to have more sustained eating issues during remission.

Cognitive and emotional factors such as planning meals, eating being an extra consideration and frustration around missing out and unpredictability impact on quality of life and enjoyment of eating, especially away from home.

Acknowledging difficulties around eating and drinking could improve quality of life and adjustment to IBD.